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Letter dated 17 April 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of decree No. 1290-7 GD of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, dated 7 April 2017, concerning a statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation addressed to the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the missile strike by the United States of America against a military airfield in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017 and the text of the statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation addressed to the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the missile strike by the United States of America against a military airfield in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the texts of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly, under agenda item 31.

(*Signed*) P. **Ilichev**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 17 April 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Decree of the State Duma concerning a statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation addressed to the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the missile strike by the United States of America against a military airfield in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017

The State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation hereby decides:

1. To adopt the statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation addressed to the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the missile strike by the United States of America against a military airfield in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017 (see enclosure).

2. To transmit the present decree and the statement to the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. V.V. Putin, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the parliaments of European States and the Congress of the United States of America.

3. To transmit the present decree and the statement to the Parliamentary Gazette for official publication.

4. This decree shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

V. V. **Volodin**
Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation

Moscow, 7 April 2017

Enclosure

Statement by the State Duma addressed to the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in connection with the missile strike by the United States of America against a military airfield in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017

The deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation are outraged at the gross violation by the United States of America of the universally recognized principles of international law: refraining from the threat or use of force, respect for human rights, the sovereignty of States, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States — in carrying out missile strikes against the Sha'irat military airfield and government troops of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 April 2017, causing loss of life.

Washington used the death of residents of Idlib governorate from chemical weapons of unknown origin as an artificial pretext for committing an act of armed aggression against a sovereign State. Without a preliminary investigation, and after rejecting the proposal of the Russian Federation regarding the need for a careful review of all the circumstances of the tragedy, the United States of America, in pursuit of its geopolitical ambitions of being a world policeman, once again demonstrated its commitment to strong-armed tactics aimed at overthrowing President Assad.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union had only just adopted a resolution, on 5 April 2017, entitled "The role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States", in which it called for a strengthening of the role of the legislative and representative bodies of States Members of the United Nations in ensuring strict observance of human rights, above all the right to life, and adherence to the rule of law. The American air force carried out strikes which resulted in loss of life, thereby grossly ignoring the call of the parliaments of the 143 States which are members of this long-established international parliamentary organization.

It cannot be ruled out that the appalling chemical attack in Idlib governorate was a deliberate provocation by the forces of war which would like to revert to the policy of the Obama administration of forced overthrow of President Assad. All this contradicts the statements made earlier by the new American administration regarding the need to combat international terrorism alongside the Russian Federation.

Washington's conduct also demonstrates a desire to distract the attention of the international community from the humanitarian disaster in the city of Mosul, which arose as a result of the actions of the United States of America. This amounts to yet another case of double standards in American policy.

All this is an ominous reminder of the events of 2003, when the United States of America and some of its allies invaded Iraq without the approval of the United Nations Security Council, on the pretext of unproved accusations involving weapons of mass destruction.

It is also deeply disturbing that, in official communications of the American authorities, there is not a word about the Nusrah Front terrorists, which clearly demonstrates Washington's desire to use that terrorist organization, affiliated with Al-Qaida, to overthrow the legitimately elected authority in Syria. Those who took

the decision to carry out strikes against the Sha'irat base were actually serving the interests of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) by according a reprieve to that organization which is banned in the Russian Federation and an opportunity to rebuild its forces, which had been thoroughly degraded as a result of the successful actions of the government forces of the Syrian Arab Republic.

There can be no doubt that these actions by the United States of America are damaging the already fragile security architecture in Europe, the stability of which has been significantly weakened by the migration crisis caused by interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States in the Middle East and North Africa.

The deputies of the State Duma call upon the parliaments of the world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to condemn the aggressive actions of the United States of America, which violate the basic principles of international law and are undermining cooperation among States of the world in combating terrorism. We are convinced that this main threat of the twenty-first century can be defeated only by building an effective system of collective international security which will be able to ensure tranquillity and safe skies for all sovereign States.

V. V. **Volodin**
Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation

Moscow, 7 April 2017